

112TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6304

To designate the North American bison as the national mammal of the  
United States.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 2, 2012

Mr. CLAY (for himself, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. SERRANO, and Mrs. NOEM)  
introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on  
Oversight and Government Reform

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## A BILL

To designate the North American bison as the national  
mammal of the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Bison Legacy  
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) bison are considered to be a historical sym-  
9 bol of the United States;

1           (2) bison were integrally linked with the eco-  
2           nomic and spiritual lives of many Indian tribes  
3           through trade and sacred ceremonies;

4           (3) there are more than 60 Indian tribes par-  
5           ticipating in the Intertribal Buffalo Council;

6           (4) numerous members of Indian tribes—

7                 (A) are involved in bison restoration on  
8                 tribal land; and

9                 (B) have a combined herd on more than  
10                1,000,000 acres of tribal land;

11           (5) the Intertribal Buffalo Council is a tribal  
12           organization incorporated pursuant to section 17 of  
13           the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as “In-  
14           dian Reorganization Act”) (25 U.S.C. 477);

15           (6) bison play an ecologically important role in  
16           modifying and improving the types of grasses found  
17           in landscapes to the benefit of grassland ecosystems;

18           (7) a bison has been depicted on the official  
19           seal of the Department of the Interior almost con-  
20           tinuously for 94 years;

21           (8) a bison is portrayed on 2 State flags;

22           (9) the bison has been adopted by 3 States as  
23           the official mammal of those States;

24           (10) the buffalo nickel played an important role  
25           in modernizing the currency of the United States;

1           (11) several sports teams have the bison as a  
2 mascot, which highlights the iconic significance of  
3 bison in the United States;

4           (12) on December 8, 1905, William Hornaday,  
5 Theodore Roosevelt, and others formed the Amer-  
6 ican Bison Society in response to the near extinction  
7 of bison in the United States;

8           (13) on October 11, 1907, the American Bison  
9 Society sent 15 bison to the first big game refuge  
10 in the United States, which was known as the  
11 “Wichita Reserve Bison Refuge”;

12           (14) in 2005, the American Bison Society was  
13 reestablished, bringing together bison ranchers,  
14 managers from Indian tribes, Federal and State  
15 agencies, conservation organizations, and natural  
16 and social scientists from the United States, Can-  
17 ada, and Mexico to create a vision for the North  
18 American bison in the 21st century;

19           (15) bison hold significant economic value for  
20 private producers and rural communities;

21           (16) as of 2007, the United States had 4,499  
22 bison producers creating jobs and providing a sus-  
23 tainable and healthy meat source contributing to the  
24 food security of the United States;

1           (17) there are bison herds in National Wildlife  
2           Refuges and National Parks; and

3           (18) members of Indian tribes, bison producers,  
4           conservationists, sportsmen, educators, and other  
5           public and private partners have committed to spear-  
6           heading a national celebration of the North Amer-  
7           ican bison, to be held annually on the first Thursday  
8           of November.

9           **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BISON AS**  
10           **THE NATIONAL MAMMAL.**

11           The mammal commonly known as the “North Amer-  
12           ican bison” is designated as the national mammal of the  
13           United States.

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